DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 256 912 CE 041 436

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TITLE Getting Started. A Preservice Manual for Adult Literacy Teachers.
INSTITUTION Northern Illinois Univ., De Kalb.; Region I Adult Education Service Center, Chicago, IL.
SPONS AGENCY Illinois State Board of Education, Springfield. Adult and Continuing Education Section.
PUB DATE 82
NOTE 32p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Basic Education; Adult Education; *Adult Literacy; Adult Programs; Adult Students; *Classroom Techniques; Community Resources; Cultural Awareness; Curriculum Design; *Educational Resources; English (Second Language); Guides; High School Equivalency Programs; *Literacy Education; *Preservice Teacher Education; Teaching Methods; Teaching Styles
IDENTIFIERS 310 Project; Resource Utilization

ABSTRACT

This preservice manual is intended to help new teachers in the field of adult literacy education understand the dimensions of their teaching situation and provide the education their students need. (Adult literacy education includes adult basic education, high school completion, and English as a second language.) Part I defines adult education and offers an historical perspective of adult literacy programs. Part II discusses the roles and responsibilities of the adult literacy teacher. Answers are provided to some questions that may echo some of the adult literacy teacher's thoughts about day-to-day life in the literacy classroom. The questions are organized around goals, curriculum design and classroom process, teaching style and communication, adults as students, and cultural awareness. A 24-item bibliography at the end of the section offers suggestions for further reading. Part III contains the following resources for teachers of adults: a list of acronyms, high school equivalency test information, information on using community resources and materials, information on professional development through Education Service Centers and graduate programs in adult education in Illinois, and brief descriptions of professional associations for adult educators. (YLB)

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PREFACE

The Region I Adult Education Service Center is co-funded by the Illinois State Board of Education, Adult and Continuing Education Section, and Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois. Under the leadership of Phyllis M. Cunningham, Project Director, the Service Center provides teaching materials, resources, and staff development workshops for adult literacy programs in the four county Chicago metropolitan area. We serve approximately 3000 literacy teachers in widely divergent neighborhoods.

This pre-service manual was written by the current staff of the Region I Adult Education Service Center. We have drawn on a draft by the previous staff and would like to acknowledge the contributions of Donna Amstutz, Fred Schied, and Paul Ilsley.

We have written the manual largely based on reflection upon our own teaching experiences in a wide diversity of adult literacy programs, through individual writing, group discussion, and editing. We assume all responsibility for the ideas expressed.

This manual is very much a work-in-progress, and we would like feedback from readers about the usefulness of the manual in its present form. Pre-service manuals by the drove fill somebody's shelves. but we are concerned with circulating to the teachers in the field a useful manual. We have included a sheet at the end for your comments and invite you to react to and evaluate the manual in whatever way you choose. We urge you to talk with us or write to us, so that your ideas may be taken into consideration in the final draft of this manual. We would like to thank Sylene Peterson, the Region I Service Center secretary, for her patient and careful typing of this manuscript, and Phyllis Cunningham for her encouragement and critical comments on this project.

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A special demonstration project conducted under provisions of the Federal Adult Education Act, Section 310, and funded by the Illinois State Board of Education, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Adult and Continuing Education Section. The facts and opinions are those of the project staff and do not necessarily represent those of the United States Department of Education or the Illinois State Board of Education.

PART I

ADULT EDUCATION DEFINED: A PERSPECTIVE

Welcome to the field of adult literacy education: adult basic education, high school completion (e.g., the G.E.D. test[1], adult high schools), and English as a Second Language. The new literacy teacher confronts a history of which he or she is often unaware. The rapid spread of these programs in the past twenty years in the U.S. is in response to several social forces and illustrates some of the underlying social functions of adult education. Consciously or unconsciously, an adult education teacher is participating in these social processes, which in turn shape the nature of the relationship that teachers can have with students. The need today is for a corps of teachers who understand the dimensions of their teaching situation and will do their best to provide the education their students need.

The popularity and funding of adult literacy programs has always varied in response to national events, social pressures, and crises. In the 1920's for instance, dominant white Anglo-Saxon Protestant groups saw recent, often Catholic immigrant groups from Southern and Eastern Europe as a threat to the traditional dominant culture, and they set up "Americanization" programs in adult evening high schools in an effort to assimilate those groups into the dominant culture. During the Depression in the 1930's the federal government created adult education programs to occupy unemployed people, to continue citizenship education, and to employ unemployed primary and secondary teachers.

In World War II, as in World War I, the Armed Forces had to train millions of soldiers in a range of basic to complex tasks, that required literacy. In World War II 300,000 illiterate men were given a 90-day course to bring their skills up to at least a fourth grade level. The GED test and certificate were developed after World War II to enable veterans to use their armed forces education for high school completion.

The mass movements of the 1950's focused attention on our national heritage of fundamental inequality and the persisting discrimination in American society. Minorities -- especially blacks and hispanics -- experience higher school drop-out and push-out rates, higher unemployment, and greater poverty. They are less unionized and experience greater on-the-job discrimination against skill training and mobility to better jobs. They tend to live in neighborhoods that are perpetually targeted for inferior public services, for landlord rip-offs, and price gouging. That includes receiving inferior education and having the lowest-paid, least secure jobs in any field they work in.

Historically, groups in American society have looked to education as one remedy for their persistent experience of inferiority and discrimination, and in the 1960's minority movements and women's organizations demanded

[1] General Educational Development

improvements in opportunities for education. As a tactic in the federal "war on poverty," adult literacy programs were created on a national scale in such legislation as the Manpower Development and Training Act (1962), the Vocational Education Act (1963) and the Economic Opportunity Act (1964). In 1965 Basic Literacy Education for Adults, or Adult Basic Education (ABE), became Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. In 1966 the Adult Education Act transferred ABE programs from the Office of Economic Opportunity to the Office of Education. New legislation since that time has extended provisions of the act, including education of bilingual or non-English speaking Americans, and institutionalized adults.

The intent of the Adult Education Act remains to eliminate illiteracy or functional illiteracy in the adult population, adults being defined as persons 16 years of age and older. ABE is defined as:

> education for adults whose inability to speak, read or write the English language constitute a substantial impairment of their ability to get or retain employment commensurate with their real ability.[2]

In practice, this definition has been used to justify many types of programs, and flexibility has been, up to now, the rule. The most common interpretation of ABE is instruction in communicative, computation and coping skills, with the highest priority on the lowest level student. Within these general guidelines, regulations and programs vary from state to state. In Illinois, for instance, mandatory education stops at age 16, persons are not defined as eligible adults until they reach 18.

Expansion of basic adult education programs was consistent with the expansion of educational instructions on many levels, including especially the community colleges. At the same time that economic expansion, especially the electronics light industry, health, and communications drew more people into the workforce and required training for those workers, unemployment and job competition made workers look to education both as interim occupation and as means of improving their employability.

Despite the Office of Economic Opportunity's "war on poverty," the dimension of the economic and educational problems are still large. Various estimates peg the numbers of adults in need of basic education as ranging from 20 million to 60 million. The most common indicator used is that of high school completion. In 1975 approximately 57 million persons, or 38% of the population, was 16 years of age and over, and no longer enrolled in high school.[3] Sixteen million persons, or 11.3% of the population, have not finished fifth grade. There are about 30 million persons, excluding illegal aliens, who do not use English as their first language.

[2]Rules and Regulations for the Adult Education Act 1966, Federal Register 32, no. 77: 6277.

[3]In Illinois 3.1 million

However, out of the 57-60 million persons estimated to be functionally illiterate, only 2-4 million are in adult education programs. Adult basic education has been described as a "creaming operation," as it now works. It picks up the people most motivated to, and perhaps most able, to improve their situation, and enables many to do so, e.g. aliens with good job skills and educational backgrounds but lacking English; persons in low-level jobs seeking promotions; women whose education was interrupted by having a family who now need to work. Even with these students, however, success is not guaranteed. About one in three ABE entrants drop out before the end of the first semester, and success rate of those who enter G.E.D. classes is low. Thus, adult education programs repeat the same experience students have had in primary and secondary education: failure. Studies show that the teachers most effective in retaining and preparing students who achieve their goals are those teachers who are most sensitive to and interactive with the students' own background.[4]

The existing public adult literacy programs are the longest sustained effort of a federal-state government partnership in literacy education. An experienced cadre of teachers, a body of published materials, and program and policy research have developed over the past two decades. At this point, diverse perspectives from teachers, students, administrators, volunteers, and communities suggest alternate models for the future of literacy education. They range from traditional academic programs, to an each-one-teach-one volunteer model, TV classes, vocational and competency curricula, retail shopping mall centers, to the personal and political empowerment model advocated by Paulo Freire.

People new to the field have a choice of how and where to work. While a sense of mission and a service ethic inspire many literacy teachers to want to help their students as much as possible, we would be naive not to recognize the limitations and tensions in doing so. We think that helping students is, at best, a process of helping students to help themselves. The literacy classroom is only a brief interlude for an adult, and the wider we make the relations of that classroom to the rest of society the more effective we can be.

[4]For a similar interpretation, see Carman St. John Hunter and David Harman, Adult Illiteracy in the United States (1979) and Jack Mezirow, G. G. Darkenwald, and Alan B. Knox, Last Gamble on Education: Dynamics of Adult Basic Education (1975).

PART II

PARTNERS: ADULTS AS STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN A LEARNING SITUATION

The new adult literacy teacher entering the classroom for the first time can easily and sensibly feel nervous, apprehensive, and full of questions over how best to proceed. The new teacher needs to become familiar with teaching methods and materials; with his/her students, their lives and their community; and with the personnel and operation of the sponsoring program. Thus, the teacher has three roles to play in the classroom as teacher, counselor, and advocate.

The effective adult education teacher does not view teaching as a situation in which to impart knowledge into the minds of students. Rather the teacher and students are involved in a mutual process of learning -- about how people learn and teach, about each other's values, ideas, and world view. The teacher is a resource person, a facilitator of his/her students' education efforts, a leader and a model. While teachers often conceive of themselves as the leader in the classroom, a perceptive teacher realizes that leadership, in fact, shifts back and forth between students and teachers as they mutually set the tone and direction of the class. To gain more knowledge and confidence about good methods of instruction, we urge you to locate and talk with other teachers, go to any workshops that are available, and ask your supervisors for help. Many programs are legally obligated to provide staff development opportunities and have annual budget allotments that they are mandated to spend on staff development. Read books and articles that people recommend. Graduate programs in adult education offer courses in teaching methods, program and curriculum development, and the psychology of the adult learner that you may want to take.

Literacy and educational needs do not exist in a vacuum, but are at the core of a person's effort to understand, negotiate and act upon his/her environment. Typically, adult education teachers are struck by the seriousness of their students -- "no motivation problems." "They are the opposite of kids in high school." Returning to an educational program often signifies strong hopes, a desire to improve themselves and their situation. This is a period of change where students need and seek advice, support, and direction. The multiple needs of the students call on both counselor and advocate roles of the teacher.

To learn more about your students, their interest and needs, and to be helpful in counseling them, maintain an open atmosphere in the classroom. Consider people's conversations not as an aside or an intrusion, but a part of the dialogue that you and students share in getting to know each other. Some counseling skills are useful, not for one-to-one psychotherapy, but those derived from group dynamics, small group counseling, peer and co-counseling, and human relations. With these you can become more sensitive to the interrelationships in the classroom, the context in people's lives for their education, and the potential of the classroom for aiding people to solve problems and act on their behalf. This approach to counseling implies very limited personal intervention by the teacher

and emphasizes a reliance on strengthening group processes already at work in the class. In literacy classes there is rarely a guidance counselor or homeroom, class is it!

In considering the wider context of the literacy class the teacher encounters situations calling for advocacy on behalf of students. Know your employing program, get to know the personnel and the resources that can aid you and your students. Every door may not "open sesame," but getting to know secretaries, maintenance and support personnel, as well as administrators, can help you to find the materials and information your students need. Investigate organizations active in the neighborhood and assess their usefulness to your students, as typically adult literacy students have many social needs, be it for information, or services. Your students may also be involved in community organizations and want to introduce those to the class.

Below are some questions and answers that may echo some of your thoughts about the nitty-gritty of day-to-day life in the literacy classroom. The questions are organized around goals, curriculum design and classroom process, teaching style and communication, adults as students, and cultural awareness. For further reading, see the bibliography at the end of this section.

Goals

1. Goals are a vague term. What exactly do you mean?

   First, your program has goals. Those goals may be to graduate as many students as possible with a GED. Another part of your program's goals may be to maintain as high an attendance rate as possible in order to justify state funding. These program goals can have an effect on your management of the classroom, so it is a good idea to be aware of them. Your program may be part of a community organization with a particular philosophy of education. Become sensitive to and interact with the agency's concerns.

   Second, your students have goals. They register for your class for many different reasons. Some come because their families have badgered them into it. Others because they have a more important goal like a raise in pay or promotion which completing the GED will provide them. Others register because the GED will give them a sense of accomplishment. These various goals can affect your management of the class.

   Third, and this in no way indicates rank order, are your own goals for the class and the individual students. You must ask yourself, "What is it that I particularly want to achieve with this class? What will best serve my students? Do I want their education to end with this classroom or do I want them to continue to enjoy learning for its own sake?"

   Fourth, the community that your educational program serves may have defined educational goals; by accepting to work with that community we have a responsibility toward implementing those goals.

2. I want my students to leave with a sense of their own learning capabilities.

The adult classroom should be a transition point for your students. You should facilitate their becoming self-directed learners. Guide them in the art and discipline of setting their own goals, scheduling, finding resources, and monitoring their own work.

The class should serve as a catalyst between the student and the content to create the self-directed learner.

3. That sounds fine but how can I encourage my students to become self-directed learners?

If your goal is for them to be self-directed then you must allow them the opportunities to make choices and decisions about their own learning experiences. The more they learn to exercise their own choices in learning experiences, setting their own goals, scheduling and determining their method of evaluation, the more likely they will be to establish good habits for becoming self-directed learners.

For example if the objective of the program is to increase reading speed and one activity is the reading of a long passage of non-content oriented material, then it will not matter if the material is science-fiction, detective stories, or romance novels. In this case, if the students are allowed to choose the material, not only will the teacher's goals be met, but the students will have had an opportunity to engage in self-directed learning.

Next, the teacher can have the students set goals and deadlines for themselves. By taking a calendar, the students can write down in a contract-like form what they intend to achieve by the end of the class. Then, with that in mind, the students can set short term weekly goals for themselves. Weekly consultations between students and teachers will determine the revisions that must be made. Later on, this will serve as a progress chart for the students. This process of scheduling will help develop the students' ability to set realistic goals for themselves.

Finally, you and the student can determine how he or she is to be evaluated. This can take the form of self-graded lessons, pre-and post-tests, achievement tests at the end of a certain amount of time, or whatever the two of you can work out in a mutually satisfactory way.

4. How can I aid my students learning to co-operate with and help one another? After all, I can't meet everybody's every need.

Encourage your students to work in pairs and small groups. As a class, discuss plans and make decisions about what the class is to do, and evaluate the group's work.

Curriculum Design and Classroom Process

5. I have heard a lot about individualizing a classroom. I have 25 people at different levels of ability working at different speeds. How can I individualize without going crazy?

Let us say the classroom goal is successfully completing the GED. The classroom consists of 25 students ranging in ability from 6.9 to 10.0 in reading levels. Some of the students, therefore, need actual mastery instruction while others need only review.

First, determine what math, reading, and science skills must be taught and the best sequence in which they must be presented. This can be modified according to teacher/student consultations but it will serve as a check that no major concept is missed.

Second, select materials which can provide two levels of instruction: (1) the mastery level for learning a skill for the first time, then provide materials for reinforcement for additional practice; (2) review for students who only need to refresh their memories. In addition, it is always a good idea to have additional texts available for those students who cannot seem to grasp the concepts presented in the primary class text.

Third, allow your students to evaluate as much of their own work as you comfortably can; encourage them to evaluate each other's work, as well. It is important for everyone to feel that failure at a particular question, problem, or activity is OK. People have many strategies for learning, including trial and error. Through teaching students in small groups, those students who master concepts quickly can help those who are having more difficulty. That way both types of students can practice newly learned skills, and they free your time for counseling and advising. The key to successful individualization is the creation of an atmosphere which helps the students recognize the fact that they are not competing against each other, but are mutually supporting each other's efforts to improve their abilities.

See the chart on the next page for one view of the wide range of useful methods to use in the adult classroom.

6. Sometimes my students will miss class for weeks at a time, then come back as though nothing were wrong!

Actually nothing maybe is wrong. Adults have developed a clear set of priorities for their lives. Families, careers, and social obligations may often rank higher than the class. The best procedure to follow in situations like these is to find out the causes of their absences and discuss the different methods they can use to keep up with the class.

If the students have a sense of belonging to a group which is supportive, they will want to come to class. The other students will exert more

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HANDY METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING ADULTS

Method	Chief Characteristic	Special Usefulness	Limitations
Lecture or Film	Information-giving	Systematic presentation of knowledge	Little opportunity for audience to participate
Forum	Information-giving followed by questions for clarification	Audience can obtain the specific information it wants on particular aspects of the subject	Formality: lack of freedom to exchange ideas
Discussion or Process Groups	High degree of group participation	Pooling of ideas, experiences and knowledge; sharing attitudes, values, and feelings	Practical only with 15 or fewer participants
Buzz Groups	100% participation even in large audiences, through small clusters of 3-6 participants	Makes individual discussion and participation possible for large groups. Develops leadership skill in participants	Contributions are not likely to be very deep or well organized
Games or Simulations	Gives participants problem solving situations	Helps participants deal with decisions and uncomfortable situations	Some particiants may believe that the situation is too child-like
Dialogue	Two or more people engaged in their own or another person's conversation	Gives interactive effect which goes beyond single presentations	Little opportunity for audience to participate
Role Playing	The "acting out" of a problem or a situation by two or more members of a group	Good for group motivation and working out difficult situations	Can be hazardous to participant's feelings

*Adapted from Selty, C. in Planning Better Programs (Leadership Pamphlet #2) (Washington: Adult Education Association of the USA, 1955).

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pressure on the absentee than you possibly could. Set up a telephone exchange where students can call each other for help with homework assignments, rides, and babysitting. Another method is to design a post card you could mail to students who are absent. By showing that you care, and by letting them know that there is no punishment involved in their having missed class, the students will feel less self-conscious about returning to class.

Above all, arrange your program so that you can remain flexible. Design your class lessons so that you review previously studied concepts. This serves as reinforcement for students who studied it with you earlier and as an introduction to students who may have missed that class. Plan your class so that there is time for students to work independently. This will give you an opportunity to talk to students who have missed class and review the topics they missed. Design at least some of your lessons to be self instructional, so that students who were absent could take them home.

7. When I began my class I sensed that my students feel a great deal of tension, almost fear. Why is it?

Some adults have had very negative experiences in their previous dealings with school systems. They feel that this is an area of their lives where they lack confidence and feel insecure. Returning to school is usually a momentous decision on their parts, requiring them to publicly admit that they lack an education. This is an aspect of their lives which many have spent hiding from their families, friends, and co-workers.

Other students, especially in ESL classes, may have B.A.'s and graduate degrees in their native language, and find not speaking English thrusts them in an embarrassing and difficult situation. Their motivation to learn may be very strong, but the conflicts about doing so may be very real.

8. What can I do about students' lack of confidence?

The best approach is to demonstrate to your students that many of the skills they have acquired in everyday living are the same skills necessary to complete your course. Then build their confidence by designing lessons in which they will be successful.

For example, in math almost every student understands how to use money. They can add a dollar, a quarter, a dime, and a penny in their heads without thinking. Ask them to do the same thing writing it down. They will almost automatically put the numbers in the correct places. If they don't they will know something is wrong. They will be aware of decimal place value and the rule of lining up the decimal points in order to add without necessarily being able to name the specific rule. Now that you have established the analogy of money and decimals the students should have no problem remembering the rules for adding and subtracting.

Certain hallmark experiences of schooling may have had a debilitating effect on your students in the past -- relations with school authorities,

tests, grades, homework, speaking in public, for instance. Engaging people's confidence in their ability to educate themselves begins often with recognizing those old conflicts. Focus a class or small group discussion on these issues as they appear. Role play test-taking or English-speaking situations. Make sure your students know the essentials of where, when, and how to take a specified test, whether it is the GED or a driver's test.

Having your students keep a journal about their new educational effort can have many benefits ranging from the opportunity to reflect on experience over time, writing practice, to taking their own feelings as serious and workable, not overwhelming. A class journal is not a diary for one's most private thoughts, but something to be shared at least with the teacher, and, perhaps, on a selective basis with other people in the class, either by exchanging journals, or publishing a short collection of the class's personal stories and thoughts.

Teaching Style and Communication

9. What can I do to set the tone of my first class so that some of these tensions can be released?

Begin by establishing a friendly atmosphere. This is best accomplished by being yourself and demonstrating your real interest in your students. Even something as simple as keeping the class on a first name basis can help your students relax, as the teacher is simultaneously an authority figure and a peer adult.

Using exercises which encourage communication will also set the climate. One such exercise is pairing people off, giving the partners an opportunity to interview each other, then having one partner introduce the other to the class. Another exercise is to make up a fun questionnaire for the students to fill out by finding the name of a person who meets the particular criteria listed:

Example: Someone who likes to cook gourmet food? _____
Someone who likes to work with wood? _____

This gets the students moving around and talking with each other. As they begin to share these goals, concerns, interests, and fears, they will begin to realize that they are not the only ones who feel as they do. Once students' fears are out in the open, students will relax more. This will give the students more confidence in participating in class discussion and make them less afraid of making mistakes.

10. I very often sense the students in my class are telling me one thing but meaning something entirely different.

Students communicate with you in many ways. Of all that communication, words may be the least important. Tone of voice, facial movements, gesture, and distancing are far more important to the conveying of a message.

When students walk into a classroom and take a seat, where do they sit? In the back of the room taking up little space? This may be a clue that the student is nervous and needs the walls of the room for protection. Another may walk in and take a desk in the middle of the classroom and spread his/her belongings out on two or three desks. This may be a clue that the student is aggressive and has a dominating nature.

Each culture, class, and sex has a different way of sending messages. What may be appropriate in one group may be inappropriate in another. Eye contact, for example, varies from culture to culture. To "look one straight in the eyes" is a sign of honesty in American white culture, a sign of defiance if displayed by a child to an adult in Latin cultures, and complete forbidden in some American Indian cultures.

Do not use one gesture, facial movement, or voice tone to make a decision about the meaning of any non-verbal message. Consider their context, look for patterns, and always test your assumptions by asking the individual involved. By verbalizing the issue a great many confusions can be cleared up and the lines of communication opened.

11. Some of my students have a very different set of values and attitudes toward society than I do. What should I do?

As adults, both you and your students have developed a frame of reference toward society based on a personal experience. This frame of reference is probably well established and unlikely to change. Be open. You can present your attitudes and values and allow them to present theirs. Accept both as valid. Criticism will only drive your students away. Attempts to change your students' opinions will only let your students feel rejected and frustrated.

A change in one aspect of an adult's life will require changes in other parts as well. For example, people whose political or personal philosophy is changed as a result of the class may find that this arouses negative feelings in their friends and relatives. All of us are likely to think very carefully before we make decisions to change that which will have a major effect on our lives, and the lives of people we know.

12. I have a person in my class with a personal habit that bothers other students. It is to the point that other students do not like to work with that student. What can I do?

This brings out the counselling role of your job. Usually a person's personal habit that is bothersome to others is a symptom of underlying difficulties. Have a private conversation with the student after class; try to elicit some of the student's own perceptions of why he/she is not more a part of the class group. Listen hard to the student for what he/she is saying and implying. Gauge what possibilities the student sees for changing the habit. Remember to be personal, honest, diplomatic, and to maintain the self-respect of the student. Place this conversation about personal habits in the context of the student's overall work in the class, and compliment the positive developments.

Another case is of the student who seeks you out after class and wants to talk about a personal problem with you. In both cases it is essential to encourage people to take responsibility for their own actions. It is not the counselor's role to give advice, or to become the judge in the personal situation. Rather, it is to strengthen the student's own perceptions of how to handle this situation. Encourage them to seek their own resources. Further conversations may be appropriate or may wane.

13. The majority of my class consists of people from the lower end of the economic scale. I feel very nervous about teaching this class. Are there special things I need to know about the disadvantaged adult?

Absolutely, the primary one is that your students are going to have the same kind of varying degrees of personal qualities that you would find in any program. There are a few things, though, that you should keep in mind.

Illness, death in the family, job shifts, transportation or childcare problems happen to everyone in our society, but people with lesser financial resources are likely to have less reliable neighborhood and public services. As a result, they may be absent from class more often and for longer periods of time than middle-class students. Your responsibility is to develop ways with your class to deal with those situations that arise. The key is to be flexible. Arrange your instruction so that students who have been absent over a long period of time can be welcomed back and not made to feel that they are behind.

Adults as Learners

14. I will be teaching an ABE class in the local high schools. What are some of the factors I have to consider when I arrange the room?

Desks, tables, and chairs found in high schools or elementary schools are often too small for adults. Consider the use of circles and tables for

work spaces. Setting up the class in straight rows isolates people from each other and exalts the position of teacher. If possible, have a variety of seating arrangements available to accommodate adults who have temporary physical problems or handicaps, or who are pregnant or too tall or obese for typical desks.

Adults' visual acuity decreases with age. So it's essential to provide good lighting in the instructional areas. Be sure to arrange the room so that everyone can see the chalkboard or overhead projections. Consider the problems of decreased vision as you select texts and make handouts for the class. Print that is too small and lacking in illustrations, examples, and diagrams will be difficult to read. Poor duplication for your handouts will defeat even the best lesson plan.

Hearing also decreases with age. This may require that you repeat important concepts, make certain that your students can watch your face in order to lip read, and, most importantly, enunciate clearly.

15. How much does the condition of the room affect the students? My room is warm but not hot. I don't let the students smoke because the room's not well ventilated.

Older adults tend to be less flexible to temperature changes. If the room is warmer or colder than their regular environment, they will be uncomfortable. For example, the construction worker who has been outside all day in cold weather will fall asleep in a room at the normal temperature. Ask your students if they are comfortable. That's the fastest way to find out.

16. Some of my students look like they're about to fall asleep. Am I boring them?

It's possible, but probably not. More than likely your students have put in a full day's work before coming to class. They are probably tired. Try to vary your instructional methods, give the students opportunities to become actively involved in the lesson and with each other. Hold lectures to a minimum. Small work units followed by practice with frequent opportunities for success should provide the stimulus they need.

17. Why do some of my students become so impatient when I assign homework?

Before that question is answered, it might be a good idea to consider just what kind of work it is and how much there is of it. Adults are very aware of the finite nature of time. Time is valuable; they don't want to waste it.

How integral is homework to learning? Should it be mandatory? Graded? How much time do they need to plan for it? It would be well to reach a consensus with your class about this that takes into consideration their multiple lives outside the classroom. Develop assignments that involve activities they do outside class anyway -- like watching the news,

helping their children with homework, writing a plot summary of TV shows or movies, phoning for information.

18. I've only been teaching GED three months, but I've noticed that most of my class can't memorize the formulae I give them. What's happening?

Although adults do have a greater difficulty remembering isolated facts, their organizational memory improves with age. What this means for you is that important information should be related to previously taught materials, real life experiences, or coded in some meaningful way in order to assist their memories.

19. Why does it take so long for some of my adult students to answer me?

As people age, their reaction time tends to be slower even though their capacity to learn remains unchanged. Adults tend to reason out their answers before they respond to a question, unlike children who respond immediately or not at all. As long as the students look as though they are processing the question, be patient. You may have to wait as long as a minute before they respond or you prompt them. Some may answer with only a word or two for fear of being wrong. If that's the case, you may want to probe or encourage a student to expand a short answer and relate it better to the discussion.

20. I'm 25 years old and teaching my first ABE class. Some of my students are old enough to be my grandparents! How can I teach them?

Your authority as a teacher will give you the initial respect you feel you need from your students. Your treatment of the class during the year will increase or decrease that respect for you based on how you treat the students as individuals and how well you meet their needs.

You will probably not have the problems of motivational discipline usually faced by the high school teacher. Most students are there because they want to be there. They know that you are a means to their own personal ends. If someone tries to disrupt the class, the other students will often be outspoken in telling that individual to stop.

Your students will bring a rich variety of background experience to the class. Utilize these experiences by having the student share them with the rest of the class. For example, in discussing local government, ask the student who is a precinct captain to explain certain political processes more fully. Ask the carpenter to demonstrate the use of a ruler. This will increase not only class participation, but also students' self-esteem.

Cultural Awareness

21. Why are so many adult literacy students members of minority groups?

The main reasons for this are that a large percentage of minority students do not complete their high school education and that there are at least 30 million people, excluding undocumented persons, who do not use English as their first language.

22. What is culture?

Anthropologists have defined culture in a number of ways including:

a) the total pattern of human behavior embodied in thought, speech, actions, and artifacts of a group of people and transmitted thought;

b) the body of customs, beliefs, social forms and material traits constituting the traditions of a group of people;

c) a complex of typical behavior or standardized social characteristics peculiar to a specific group of people.

23. How does culture affect the teaching/learning situation?

Since a cultural system is the frame of reference that shapes and governs a person's picture of the world around him or her, what is "logical" and "reasonable" to one system may be quite the contrary to another. For example, to an Anglo-American, the concept of getting the best grade and winning a race seems reasonable; yet to a Navajo or Pueblo Indian getting the best grade and winning a race is seen as showing up your classmates, which is unacceptable.

24. What if students from different cultures act like Americans?

People have a tendency to over-simplify the adaptation process, and often accept the borrowing of a material element of culture -- like a car or TV or a book -- as evidence that a person has assimilated the non-material elements of culture, like values, language, or social customs. Values and customs change much more slowly, over generations, in the context of people's relationships at work, in the neighborhood, in the family and in social life. We can see these patterns in the Chicano, Black, and Appalachian white cultures that have developed over centuries of migration to and within the United States.

25. Why should I study the culture of my students?

Teachers working with students from other ethnic, racial and economic groups are often confronted with confusion and frustration in their early efforts to teach. If a teacher does not interact with students' cultural backgrounds, the potential for education within that classroom will

continue to shrink. The teacher appears to the students to be insensitive, ignorant, or foreign, and thereby effectively isolates him or herself from the students. A danger then is for teachers to handle their own discomfort in this atmosphere by blaming the students' culture for the failures in the classroom. The second major consequence of this miscommunication is for the teacher to attempt to acculturate the students forcibly, imposing his/her method of education, subject matter, and values upon the student with no dialogue.

26. What can I do to better interact with a culturally diverse group of students?

Teachers are encouraged to learn about, develop a respect for, and interact with the culture of their students. Some questions to consider include:

- What patterns of education has the person experienced? What kind of teaching style is he/she accustomed to? How does that style mesh or conflict with your own? How does your teaching style influence your interest in cross-cultural communication?

- For what reasons did the student migrate? What are some of the contributing economic, political, and social conditions where they came from? How are these different in their new home?

- How are families organized within that culture? How is power distributed? What are the family's resources and responsibilities?

- How does that particular culture, through its language, myth, arts, beliefs and customs, give order to the social and natural worlds?

A Reading List for Adult Literacy Teachers

Counseling

Allman, Lawrence R. and Dennis T. Jaffe, ed. Readings in Adult Psychology: Contemporary Perspectives. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1977.

Rogers, Carl R. Freedom to Learn. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1969.

Schlossberg, Nancy K., Lillian E. Troll, and Zandy Liebowitz, ed. Perspectives on Counseling Adults: Issues and Skills. Monterey, Calif.: Brooks, Cole Publishing Company, 1978.

Adult Learning: Theory and Method

Amstutz, Donna. Adult Basic Education Sourcebook. Springfield, Ill.: Office of Education, Adult and Continuing Education Section, 1978.

Bischof, Ledford J. Adult Psychology. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1976.

Kidd, Roby J. How Adults Learn. New York: Association Press, 1973.

Knowles, Malcolm. Self-Directed Learning, A Guide for Learners and Teachers. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1975.

Simon, Sidney et al., ed. Values Clarification. New York: Hart Publishing Company, 1972.

Shor, Ira. Critical Teaching and Everyday Life. Boston: South End Press, 1980.

Literacy Teaching

Abrahams, Roger D. and Rudolph C. Troike, ed. Language and Cultural Diversity in American Education. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972.

Byrne, Donn. Teaching Oral English. London: Longman Group Limited, 1976.

Freire, Paulo. Education for Critical Consciousness. New York: The Seabury Press, 1973.

Mackay, Donald, Bruce Barkman and R. R. Jordan. Reading in a Second Language, Hypotheses, Organization, and Practice. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1979.

Stauffer, Russell G. The Language-Experience Approach to the Teaching of Reading. New York: Harper and Row, 1970.

Stevick, Earl W. Memory, Meaning, and Method: Some Psychological Perspectives on Language Learning. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1976.

Communication

Fast, Julius. Body Language. New York: Pocket Books, 1970.

Satnre, Freda, Ray Olson, and Calressa Whitney. Let's Talk, An Introduction to Interpersonal Communication. Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman & Company, 1973.

General

Ashton-Warner, Sylvia. Teacher. New York: Bantam Books, 1979.

Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: The Seabury Press, 1973.

Hunter, Carman St. John and David Harman. Adult Illiteracy in the United States. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979.

Kozoi, Jonathan. Prisoners of Silence, Breaking the Bonds of Adult Illiteracy in the United States. New York: The Continuum Publishing Corporation, 1980.

Knowles, Malcolm. The Modern Practice of Adult Education. Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1980.

Mezirow, Jack, G. G. Darkenwald, and A. B. Knox. Last Gamble on Education: Dynamics of Adult Basic Education. Washington, D.C.: Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., 1975.

Ryan, William. Blaming the Victim. New York: Vintage Edition, 1976.

PART III

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS OF ADULTS

A. Acronyms for Adult Education Teachers

ABE	Adult Basic Education
ACE	Adult and Continuing Education
AEA	Adult Education Association of the USA
APL	Adult Performance Level
CBE	Competency-Based Education
CETA	Comprehensive Employment and Training Act
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESR	Educational Service Region
GED	General Educational Development
IACEA	Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association
ISBE	Illinois State Board of Education
LEA	Local Educational Agencies
NAPCAE	National Association of Public Continuing and Adult Educators

B. High School Equivalency Test Information

Dates, times, and test sites vary from county to county. For specific information call the county superintendent.

Cook County	Educational Service Region of Cook County 33 West Grand Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60610 (312) 443-5000
Lake County	Educational Service Region of Lake County County Administrative Building Room 904A Waukegan, Illinois 60085 (312) 689-6313
Will County	Educational Service Region of Will County 14 West Jefferson Street Joliet, Illinois 60431 (815) 727-8466
Du Page County	Educational Service Region of Du Page County 431 Country Farm Road Wheaton, Illinois 60187 (312) 682-7150

C. Using Community Resources and Materials

Because the community in which the student lives in has such an impact on the learning situation, it is essential that the literacy teacher consider using community resources in the classroom. In fact, the Chicago metropolitan area has tremendous resources that a teacher can draw upon, if they can devote some time and energy to doing so. A listing of such resources would be voluminous, so below we 1) suggest a general approach to identifying community resources and involving students in the process of using them, and 2) give a sample of helping agencies in Cook County.

Consider the social attitudes and needs of the students, and evaluate which public and private community agencies would be of greatest interest to the class. At the minimum, such agencies often have printed materials they can send out describing their activities, in the form of newsletters, brochures, or booklets. They may also have audio-visual material to lend. In addition, agencies often supply guest speakers. Consider also whether your students are already involved in any such agencies and engage them in the effort to establish communication with them.

Exposure to these community organizations is an important way for students to learn about how to find resources to meet their needs. Not only can they improve literacy by discussing the reading about community agencies and organizations, but a class can also gain experience in interviewing public officials and private agency representatives by preparing for a class visit.

Students themselves need the experience of investigating private and public agencies and of negotiating paths through official red tape, in order to develop a better understanding of how these agencies function. By gaining a deeper perspective, the students will come to see these agencies as manageable public institutions that should be serving their needs. Often patterns of race, sex, and class discrimination isolates people. Social explorations like these are good ways to try to break down the isolation, tensions, and fears. Role plays in class of phone and face-to-face encounters would help.

You may also want to consider several other sources. Your local library or school library may be ready to discard used books from time to time. Ask them to inform you. Some local organizations may be willing to supply you with paper, pencils, etc., if you are in short supply. Ask local newspaper distributors for copies of day-old newspapers to be used for class projects. Four times a year the Chicago Tribune prints a guide to community resources. Many textbook publishers will send you their catalogs. Most catalogs contain information on how to obtain examination copies of materials (usually for a specific period of time) at no cost.

Consider also resources you may use commonly at home: junk mail; consumer labels and warranties; magazines; tax or application forms; bills; maps, rail and bus timetables; recipes and appliance manuals.

Helping Agencies in Cook County

I. EMERGENCIES

Ambulance Service	911
Fire Department	911
Police Department	911
Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Program at Chicago Read Mental Health Center	794-3609
Alternative Hotline (especially if crisis is drug induced)	973-5400
Metro Help (24 hours)	929-5150
Parental Stress (24 hours)	463-0390
Rush-Presbyterian/St. Luke's Poison Control Center	942-5969
Women in Crisis	528-3303

II. HEALTH SERVICES

Chicago Board of Health	744-4340
Chicago Board of Health Rodent Control	744-4323
Chicago Board of Health Maternal and Infant Care	744-3293
Chicago Board of Health/Mental Health Center	744-4290
Chicago Board of Health/VD Control Center	842-0222
Chicago Medical Society (Physician Referral)	922-0417
Chicago Dental Society (24 hours)	726-4321
Planned Parenthood	322-4200
Illinois Right to Life Committee	922-1918

III. LEGAL SERVICES

American Civil Liberties Union	236-5564
Chicago Bar Association	782-7348
Legal Aid Bureau	922-5625
Illinois Fair Employment Practices Commission	793-2240
Illinois Commission on Human Relations	793-2893

IV. CONSUMER INFORMATION AND PROTECTION

Chicago Welfare Rights Organization	922-6272
Better Business Bureau	346-3313
State's Attorney Consumer Fraud & Complaint Line	443-8425
Illinois Attorney General Consumer Protection Bureau	793-3581

V. SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Mattachine Midwest	337-2424
Gray Panthers	663-9093
Day Care Crisis Council	348-7972
AA (Alcoholics Anonymous)	346-1475
Anti-Cruelty Society	644-8338
Animal Welfare League	667-0088
Illinois Tourist Information Center	793-2094

VI. EDUCATION

Chicago Board of Education	641-414
Cook County Schools	273-3383
City Colleges of Chicago	269-8000

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

University Without Walls/Chicago State University (program geared to working adults who want to obtain a college degree	995-2221
Board of Governors Degree Program/ Chicago State University	995-2213

SCHOLARSHIPS

State Scholarship Commission	793-3745

VII. CIVIL RIGHTS

Chicago Urban League	285-5800
National Organization for Women	922-0025

VIII. EMPLOYMENT

Midwest Women's Center	922-8528
Illinois State Employment Service Bureau	793-3500
Unemployment Compensation Information	793-3500
Tri-Faith Employment Project	922-4200
CASA Central	276-0500
SER Jobs for Progress (Free employment agency with special emphasis on placement for Spanish-speaking)	733-7120
Northwest Employment Development Corporation	278-5130
American Indian Center	275-5871
Women Employed	782-3902

IX. MISCELLANEOUS

Community Referral Service	427-9623
Chicago Public Information Line	269-2800
Zip Code Information Service	886-2590

D. Professional Development through Service Centers

Illinois is divided into five regions, and in the fall of 1976 Adult Education Service Centers became operationalized in each region via grants from the Illinois Office of Education. The purpose of the Centers is to provide materials, workshops, and other services that will help to equip adult educators with specific skills. In addition to the regional Service Centers, a statewide English as a Second Language Service Center was established in 1976. Fortunately, it is located in our region at the following address:

State-Wide ESL/AE Service Center
500 South Dwyer Avenue
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005
(312) 255-9820

The Region I Service Center provides a variety of teacher and program related services for adult educators in Cook, Du Page, Lake and Will counties. The services provided include:

1. The "Adult Education Reporter" a bi-monthly newsletter.

2. A circulation collection of over 5,000 commercial, professional diagnostic, and teacher-made materials, pertaining to ABE, GED, ESL, the Constitution, and other areas of adult education.

3. Consultation services by telephone or in person at the Center or at local programs in such areas as materials and curriculum development.

4. Assistance in professional development activities and periodic local and regional workshops.

5. Information for professional growth through university courses and informal educational opportunities.

The address of the Region I Adult Education Service Center is:

Region I Adult Education Service Center
3901 South State Street
Chicago, Illinois 60609
(312) 924-0743

E. Professional Development through Graduate Programs in Adult Education

There are six universities within driving distance which provide formal courses in adult/continuing education. If you are interested in obtaining a master's degree, certificate of advanced study, or doctoral degree in the field, you might want to consider one of the following universities:

Northern Illinois University (M.S. Ed., Ed.D)
Graduate Studies in Adult/Continuing Education
Gabel Hall 101
DeKalb, Illinois 60115
(815) 753-1448 or (312) 924-0743

University of Illinois - Urbana (M.A., C.A.S., Ed.D., Ph.D.)
Office of Admissions and Records
100A Administration Building
Urbana, Illinois 61801
(217) 337-0302

University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee (M.A., Ph.D.)
Department of Education
Enders Hall 62?
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201
(414) 963-4995

Dr. Russell Robinson

National College of Education (M.Ad.Ed., M.S., C.A.S.)
School of Continuing Studies
2840 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60201
(312) 256-5150 x 319

YES

Northeastern Illinois University (M.A. in TESOL)
Linguistics Department
5500 North St. Louis Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60625
(312) 583-4050 x 8100

Roosevelt University (M.A.)
Graduate Program in Adult Education
430 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605
(312) 341-3704

Dr. Master Jones

YES

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

F. Professional Associations for Adult Educators

IACEA (Illinois Adult and Continuing Educators Association) represents all those in Illinois who deal with the education of adults in such institutions as public schools, libraries, community and social welfare agencies, mass media, universities and many more. Major activities include an annual conference in the spring and ongoing legislative monitoring of state legislation affecting adult education. The two major publications are a monthly newsletter, Keeping Pace, and a quarterly journal, Setting the Pace. For further information write to:

IACEA Membership
Donna Moyers
School District U46
360 Dupage Street
Elgin, Illinois 60120

AEA-USA (Adult Education Association of the United States of America) is a national organization representing the interests of all concerned with the education of adults. The major activities include a national conference in the fall and publication of a monthly magazine, Lifelong Learning: The Adult Years, and a quarterly journal, Adult Education. For further information, contact:

Executive Director
AEA
810 Eighteenth Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

NAPCAE (National Association for Public, Continuing, and Adult Education) is a national organization representing adult education. In October 1982, NAPCAE and AEA will merge to form a single organization. For further information, contact:

Executive Director
NAPCAE
1201 Sixteenth Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Basic Choices is a network of persons which formed to raise fundamental questions about the meaning of education. Its main forum is a newsletter, Second Thoughts, which deals with basic questions about mandatory continuing education, professionalization, and other issues related to social control. For further information write to:

Second Thoughts
1121 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53715

TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) is an international professional organization for those concerned with the teaching of English as a Second and Foreign Language and of Standard English as a Dialect. Important meetings include the annual convention held in the spring and a summer institute.

TESOL publishes a research quarterly and bi-monthly newsletter, as well as occasional books and monographs on various topics of interest to the profession. For further information write:

TESOL
202 D.C. Transit Building
Georgetown University
Washington, D.C. 20057

Illinois TESOL/BE, the Illinois State affiliate of TESOL, is a professional organization for those concerned with the teaching of English as a Second Language and bi-lingual education in public schools, and in other adult education programs throughout Illinois. Illinois TESOL/BE holds an annual convention in early spring as well as state workshops in the fall and winter. Publications include a bi-monthly newsletter, selected papers from the annual convention and occasional position papers. For further information, write:

Elliott Judd, Executive Secretary
Illinois TESOL/BE
Department of Linguistics
University of Illinois - Chicago Circle
Chicago, Illinois 606080

PRESERVICE MANUAL EVALUATION

We would like to receive your reactions to this manual. Has it been helpful? What is missing? Any suggestions for improvement? The space below is for your thoughts.

Detach this page from the manual and return it to the address below. Thank you.

Region I Adult Education Service Center
PSM EVALUATION
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